

DEVON STRUCTURE PLAN  
2001 TO 2016 (Deposit Draft)

**BACKGROUND PAPER 3**

**POPULATION CHANGE AND  
DEVELOPMENT NEEDS**

**(Updated as at 6 May 2003)**

*This paper represents an update to 'Background Paper 3  
Population Change and Development Needs' published  
in July 2002.*

*Changes to the document are sidelined.*

*Deleted text - is shown by ~~strikethrough~~ and*

*New text - is underlined*

**May 2003**



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## Background Paper 3

# POPULATION CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS (updated May 2003)

## Introduction

1.1 One of the key roles of the Structure Plan is to establish the broad levels and distribution of development that should be planned for. These levels of development cannot be considered in isolation and need to take account of need at both national and regional level. Regional Planning Guidance for the South West was published in September 2001, following a Public Examination, and it indicated the most appropriate levels of development for the Region in the period 1996 to 2016 – and the possible levels of housing development within each Structure Plan area, including Devon. Regional Planning Guidance therefore provides an up to date and clear starting point for the assessment of development need in the Structure Plan Alteration in the period 2001 to 2016.

1.2 National policy guidance (PPG11) indicates that the issue of overall levels of development should not normally be reopened at the local level when preparing Structure Plans unless there has been a significant change in circumstances since the preparation of Regional Planning Guidance and there are clear reasons for doing so. The Structure Plan Authorities in Devon have, however, assessed the recommendations of Regional Planning Guidance against the most recent patterns of change, demographic data and projections of future needs – both in order to confirm the robustness of the Regional Planning Guidance and to understand the implications of the levels of change being proposed for each part of Devon. This paper therefore considers :

1. Regional Planning Guidance : conclusions in respect of housing provision in Devon
2. Implications for change in Devon : arising from Regional Planning Guidance housing proposals
3. Regional Development strategy
4. Development Strategy for Devon
5. Development distribution in Devon : 2001 to 2016

## Regional Planning Guidance : Housing Provision

### *RPG Housing Requirement*

1.3 Regional Planning Guidance indicates a development provision for Devon of 4,300 dwellings per annum for the period 1996 to 2016. The robustness of the RPG dwelling figure has been assessed at a technical level by considering whether the changes it would imply to underlying patterns of demographic change (particularly future levels of migration) are appropriate in the light of the most up to date information available.. While the Regional Planning Guidance indicates possible development from a 1996 base, actual rates of development in Devon since 1996 have been very close to the anticipated rates of change and it is therefore appropriate to consider the Regional Planning Guidance rates from 2001 – the base date for the Alteration.

1.4 ~~Using the most recent data in respect of births, deaths, headship rates and population age structure, it is possible to determine the implied level of migration resulting from the provision of 4,300 dwellings per annum in the period 2001 to 2016. This analysis suggests an implied net inward migration rate of about 7,600 per annum. Although the detailed results from the 2001 Census are not yet available in respect of Household Representative Rates, using the latest available data for births, deaths and population age structure, it is possible to determine the implied level of migration resulting from the provision of 4,300 dwellings per annum in the period 2001 to 2016. This analysis suggests an implied net inward migration rate of about 7,400 per annum.~~

1.5 ~~Recent levels of annual net inward migration into Devon (based on NHSCR data) have varied significantly between +5,000 and +11,000 per annum. Rates of net inward migration have averaged about 7,500 per annum in the period since 1994, and a migration rate of 7,600 is therefore considered to be broadly in line with the most recent patterns of population movement. Recent levels of annual net inward migration into Devon have varied considerably between +1,800 and +13,900 per annum in the last 6 years. Rates of net inward migration have averaged about +7,400~~

over the last 20 years and a migration rate of +7,400 is, therefore, considered to be broadly in line with the most recent patterns of population movement.

1.6 The proposed Regional Planning Guidance annual rate of change can also be compared to recent build rates within Devon. In the period since 1995, actual completion rates in Devon have varied from 3,700 to 4,600 but the average for the ~~six-seven~~ year period up to ~~2001-2002~~ has been ~~4,260-4,200~~ per annum, reflecting the relatively low level of completions over the past two years, are, very close ~~slightly lower than~~ ~~to~~ the Regional Planning Guidance proposed rate of 4,300 per annum. This rate of development can be compared with the high rates of change between 1981 and 1991 (6,000 dwellings per annum) and the lower rates of change between 1991 and 1995 (4,100 dwellings per annum). Diagram 1 below illustrates the most recent development rates in Devon

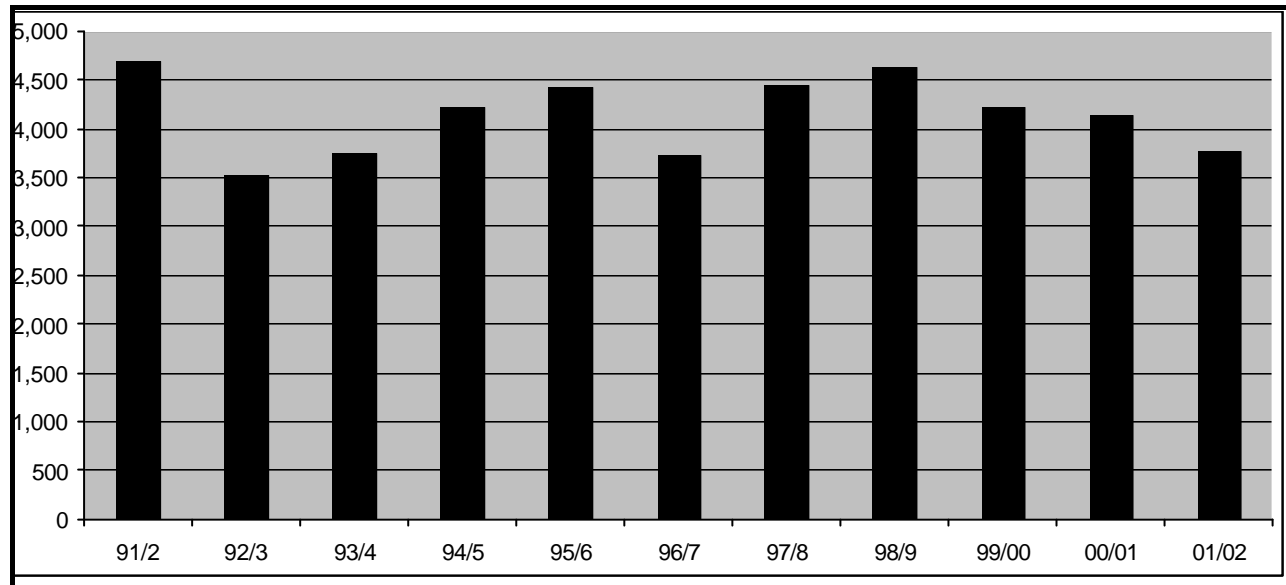


Diagram 1 : Dwelling Completions in Devon 1991 to ~~2001-2002~~

1.7 On the basis of the demographic assessment and recent build rates, it has therefore been concluded that there are no clear technical reasons for departing from the level of housing provision proposed in Regional Planning Guidance. The provision of 4,300 dwellings per annum in Devon will, however, have important implications for population change, workforce growth and demand for supporting infrastructure.

## Implications for Change in Devon

### Population Change

2.1 An annual rate of dwelling provision of 4,300 dwellings in the period 2001 to 2016 would be consistent with an overall population increase of approximately 84,000, Devon's population increasing from 1,093,400 to 1,177,400. Table 1 below illustrates the change in overall population and age structure implied for the 15 year period. It shows significant increases in the population over 65, but reduced numbers of children under 15. ~~An annual rate of dwelling provision of 4,300 dwellings in the period 2001 to 2016 would be consistent with an overall population increase of approximately 70,000. Devon's population increasing from 1,076,600 to 1,146,600. Table 1 below illustrates the change in overall population and age structure implied for the 15 year period. It shows significant increases in the population over 65 but reduced numbers of children under 15.~~

Age Group	Population at 2001	Population at 2016	Change from 2001	% Change
0 - 4	54,200	55,800	1,600	0.9
5 - 14	130,500	110,600	-19,900	-15.2
15 - 29	180,400	210,500	30,100	16.7
30- 65	495,800	501,800	6,000	1.2
65 - 74	107,400	142,300	34,900	32.5
75 +	108,300	126,700	18,400	17.0
Total	1,076,600	1,146,600	70,000	6.5

Table 1 : Anticipated Population change 2001 to 2016

2.2 This assessment of population change reflects assumptions relating to vacancy rates within the dwelling stock, levels of sharing and second homes. ~~For the purposes of testing the Regional Planning Guidance proposals, it has been~~

~~assumed that vacancy rates in Devon will fall over the period to 2016, from an estimated 4.75 % as at 2001 to 4.0 % in 2016. This reduction is considered to be consistent with the assumptions underlying Regional Planning Guidance which had assumed that vacancy rates in the South West as a whole would fall to 3% in 2016 reflecting the fact that vacancy rates in Devon tend to be above the regional average. This assessment of population change reflects assumptions relating to vacancy rates within the dwelling stock, levels of sharing and second homes. For the purposes of testing the Regional Planning Guidance proposals, it has been assumed that vacancy rates in Devon in 2016 will be the same as they were in 2001 i.e. 3.2%. This is considered to be consistent with the assumptions underlying Regional Planning Guidance which had assumed that vacancy rates in the South West as a whole would fall to 3% in 2016 and reflects the fact that vacancy rates in Devon tend to be above the regional average.~~

2.3 **Second and holiday homes** represent a significant proportion of total dwellings in certain parts of Devon. The projections undertaken for the period 2001 to 2016 have assumed, however, that the proportion of second and holiday homes in the overall dwelling stock remains at current ( 2001 ) levels.

### ***Workforce Change and Employment Land Needs***

2.4 A consequence of the changing population and age structure in Devon will be the change in the number of people of working age and this, together with changing rates of economic activity, will result in significant changes in the overall workforce living in Devon. The working age population of Devon is expected to increase by approximately 37,000 over the 15 year period, and on this basis it is estimated that the overall Devon active workforce is likely to increase by about 25,000 between 2001 and 2016.

2.5 Employment land requirement can be assessed on the basis of need (as reflected in the growth in workforce and the need to reduce unemployment) or demand (as illustrated by current rates of land take up). These methods of assessment were adopted for the quantification of employment land needs when preparing the adopted Devon Structure Plan, and have also been used as part of the Alteration assessment process.

2.6 Unemployment in Devon as a whole is currently at a relatively low level compared to past experience, but it remains higher than in the South West region overall. It may therefore be considered appropriate to plan for unemployment rates in Devon to fall to the regional average over the period of the Alteration and this would imply a further need for an additional 3,500 jobs. Assuming similar assumptions to those previously adopted for Structure Plan analysis, in respect of land based employment (30 to 35 %) and employment density (40 to 60 employees per hectare) an overall increase in workforce in Devon of about 25,000 would be likely to result in demand for between 180 ha and 310 ha of employment land development over the 15 year Alteration period. This range also allows for a significant level of provision over and above the simple assessment (+25 %) in order to allow for relocations, economic restructuring and site choice and flexibility.

2.7 Past rates of employment land take up in Devon, between 1995 and 2001, have been low compared to past experience and have averaged less than 20 ha per annum. Over a 15 year period this would therefore suggest a possible need for up to 300 ha. Allowing an additional 25% for site choice and flexibility would suggest a possible “need” for up to 375 ha in the period 2001 to 2016. In some areas, however, such as Exeter, rates of take up are expected to increase significantly in the immediate future as a result of major new investment. Even allowing for the effect of these major development proposals, however, past rates of take up would not suggest a need for more than 400 ha in Devon in the period 2001 to 2016.

2.8 Existing plans in Devon (planning permissions and proposals in emerging Local Plans) already provide for approximately 660 ha of employment land for the period starting in 2001. This indicates, therefore, that, in overall terms, there is sufficient land already identified to meet needs and demand in Devon over the period to 2016, and there would be no clear requirement for the Alteration to not propose additional employment land. However as a result of considerations following the publication of the Structure Plan 2001 to 2016 Deposit Draft (July 2002) an additional 60 ha is proposed (Exeter /East Devon – Science Park 25 ha, North Devon – Roundswell 10 ha, South Hams – Langage 20 ha, and Teignbridge an additional 5 ha) resulting in an overall provision for 2001 to 2016 of 720 ha.

## **THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

### **Regional Development Objectives**

3.1 The RPG sets out a number of key statements relating to the future distribution of development. The most important of these may be summarised as :

- the **Principal Urban Areas** ( PUAs ) identified in the RPG [including Plymouth, Exeter and Torbay] offer the best opportunity for accommodating the majority of development in the most sustainable way. The aim should be to concentrate most development at the PUAs. In respect of the role of the PUAs in accommodating future growth, the RPG distinguishes between the “capital” PUAs (such as **Exeter and Plymouth**) which should maintain their economic vitality - and others (such as **Torbay**) which are more constrained.

- **other designated centres for growth** [including Barnstaple] can provide for sustainable and balanced growth to meet other identified sub-regional development needs. The level of growth to be accommodated in these centres must be considered in relation to their function and not provide for growth that can be accommodated at the PUAs;
- **outside the PUAs and other designated centres for growth**, towns should be designated to act as local service centres for the wider rural areas of the region;
- **other small towns and villages** in rural areas should provide for local needs;
- policies should resist the continuing substantial planned expansion of residential development of **small dormitory towns** within easy commuting distance of the PUAs that has occurred historically.

## **Sub Regional Implications**

3.2 As well as setting out overall development principles, RPG also sets out development objectives for two sub regions encompassing parts of Devon. In the **Central Sub Region** (including eastern and southern Devon), the RPG identifies potential for further growth - with the Exeter area having a pivotal role in spreading economic prosperity to the west of the Region. The strategy in this part of the South West is to :

- raise the **economic performance** of the sub-region;
- encourage sustainable growth at **Exeter and Taunton** and economic diversification at **Torbay**;
- improve **transport and economic links** within and through the sub-region and with neighbouring areas;
- focus housing, employment, retail and social facilities in sustainable locations to **reduce social exclusion** and rural need;
- conserve and enhance important **environmental assets**.

3.3 In the **Western Sub Region** (relating to western and northern Devon) , the RPG priority is to stimulate economic growth and increase prosperity and diversification. The strategy in this part of the South West is to :

- **alleviate remoteness through investment** in transport infrastructure and other communications networks;
- **create the conditions for growth, regeneration and diversification** in the sub-region by promoting economic development and environmental improvements;
- **focus major new employment, social and cultural investment** at Plymouth and Barnstaple,
- **encourage appropriate housing, employment, retail and social facilities** in sustainable locations to reduce social exclusion and rural need;
- **conserve and enhance the coastline, landscape, historic and industrial heritage** of the sub-region and recognise them as major assets in the drive to encourage regeneration;
- **conserve and enhance important environmental assets**.

## THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR DEVON

4.1 The Regional Planning Guidance strategy is considered to represent a continuation and enhancement of the existing Structure Plan strategy. The adopted Structure Plan identified four main Areas of Economic Activity (AEAs) focused on Plymouth, Exeter, Torbay / Newton Abbot and Barnstaple, Regional and Sub Regional Centres, and the concept of Area and Local Centres. It also identified a rural area of development constraint and a rural area for economic diversification.

4.2 The Alteration is not therefore proposing a material change to the overall development strategy in Devon. The revised Strategy therefore :

- *promotes sustainable and balanced development by focusing an increased proportion of residential and economic provision on the four main Areas of Economic Activity.*
- *seeks to fully realise the potential for sustainable development within the PUs.*
- *provides for the development of two new communities to ensure that the housing and employment needs of the Plymouth and Exeter AEAs can be adequately met in the most sustainable way.*
- *recognises that the Sub Regional Centres should play an important role in meeting strategic development needs within the AEAs.*
- *provides for development in the main market and coastal towns in order to promote their self sufficiency and meet local needs.*
- *seeks to protect Devon's historic and environmental resources and conserve and enhance its biodiversity*
- *gives particular emphasis on economic diversification, facility development and improved accessibility in the Priority Area for Rural Regeneration.*
- *recognises the need to prioritise regeneration initiatives and investment in the main urban areas and in certain market and coastal towns.*
- *identifies a strategic transport network which should be maintained and enhanced so as to support the overall Development Strategy.*

### Sub Regional Priorities

4.3 The two broad sub regions identified in the RPG as relating to Devon, the Western sub region and the Central sub region, include areas with distinctive characteristics and development issues. In strategic terms they can therefore more appropriately be considered to relate to four broad areas of Devon as shown on **Map 1** :

<b>Western Sub Region :</b>	<b>Central Sub Region :</b>
Plymouth and South Western Devon area	Exeter and eastern Devon area
Northern Devon area	Torbay and south eastern Devon area

4.4 The development distribution set out in the adopted Structure Plan reflected a number of key policy decisions in relation to each of these areas. The adopted Structure Plan strategy :

- limited new development in the Torbay and south Devon area in view of the landscape and other constraints affecting the main settlements in that area, and its relatively limited scope for significant economic growth.
- provided for an increased level of development within northern Devon in order to reflect improving scope for economic growth, a high level of existing commitments and the relative lack of major landscape and environmental constraints.
- ensured that development need in the Plymouth area was met in full
- ensured that the economic potential of the Exeter and eastern Devon area was realised.

These broad conclusions were generally supported by the EIP Panel.



KEY	
	Sub Regional Boundary ( as interpreted for Devon )
	County Boundary
	District Planning Authority Boundary Local Plans and Development Control ( outside National Parks )
	Sub Area Boundary

Map 1: Sub Regional Boundaries

## Development Distribution in Devon 2001 to 2016

5.1 Against this revised regional policy background, and in the light of the strategy set out in the adopted Devon Structure Plan, the Alteration process identified a number of key factors that needed to be taken into account when considering sub regional development needs in the period to 2016.

### The Central Sub Region within Devon

5.2 Demographic projections consistent with the overall Regional Planning Guidance level of housing change indicate a possible need for about ~~37,500~~36,600 dwellings in this part of Devon in the period 2001 to 2016 – an annual requirement for about 2,500 dwellings per annum. This compares to actual completion rates of about in the period 1995 to 2001 of about 2,300 dwellings per annum.

5.3 Based on demographic projections consistent with the overall Regional Planning Guidance development provision for Devon, this sub area is expected to experience a substantial growth in workforce in the period 2001 to 2016 – an increase of more than 21,000, or about 85% of the Devon change overall.

### Exeter and Eastern Devon

5.4 Over recent years the area has been successful in attracting major new economic investment and in the period since 1991 almost half of all new jobs created in Devon have been located within this part of Devon. Major new economic investment is already planned for the Exeter area, and the most recent projections indicate further significant growth in the workforce over the period to 2016. Housing completions since 1995 have been consistent with current Structure Plan development provision, with population growth in this part of the sub region being primarily related to employment, retirement and pre-retirement inward migration.

5.5 The future development of this area is critical to the long term prosperity of Devon and, in the context of the revised RPG, it will play an increasingly important role in the overall development strategy for the South West.

### The Exeter PUA

5.6 The Exeter PUA is the main focal point within the Central Sub Region. The sub region extends into central and western Somerset, Exmoor and western Dorset, including a second PUA at Taunton. While Exeter is identified in Regional Planning Guidance as a “Capital” PUA, Taunton is identified as a second tier PUA with potential to accommodate “appropriate” development to meet the needs of its area. It is concluded therefore that Exeter should be the primary focus for major economic investment in the Central sub region – with Taunton playing an important but complementary role.

5.7 The studies undertaken of development potential in the Exeter PUA area (see separate study paper) have indicated that there is significant potential for development within the Exeter PUA, arising from the development of brown land and urban green field sites, but that there are no likely appropriate or sustainable locations for major strategic urban extensions. *(The subsequent proposal to amend the Exeter PUA boundary in the Pre-EIP Changes as compared to the Deposit Draft now encompasses the development proposals of the new community, Skypark intermodal facility, and Science Park proposals to the east of Exeter within East Devon District)*

5.8 Maximising the potential identified ~~within-at~~ the PUA, together with possible smaller scale peripheral development ~~and the provision of the new community~~, suggested scope for about ~~7,000~~10,850 dwellings ~~within-at~~ the Exeter PUA in the period 2001 to 2016.

### ~~Elsewhere in the Exeter AEA~~

5.9 The studies of the Exeter area ~~also indicated, however, that there was scope to accommodate sustainable development outside of the PUA but within the Exeter AEA. The study~~ conclude that the most sustainable location for ~~such new~~ development, ~~beyond that provided within the city of Exeter,~~ – would be at the new community within East Devon District, ~~where~~ there would be good accessibility to major employment opportunities and scope to take advantage of planned sustainable transport links to the PUA.

5.10 The studies indicated that the new community could accommodate at least 3,500 dwellings in the period to 2016 *(the Deposit Draft makes provision for at least 3,000 dwellings)* and that, subject to detailed assessment, a further phase of development could provide up to 1,000 additional dwellings. Higher levels of provision within the PUA/AEA ~~were are~~ not considered to be achievable before 2016 – given the likely start date for new community development and a realistic assessment of build rates.

5.11 In total, the studies undertaken indicated potential for the provision of about 11,000 dwellings within the AEA – together with existing provision for 125ha of employment land ~~and the provision of a 25 ha Science Park~~. Outside of

the AEA development should be located at the main market and coastal towns ( the Area Centres ) in order to meet local needs and achieve balanced development.

#### Mid Devon District

5.12 Within Mid Devon, Tiverton was identified in Regional Planning Guidance as a centre who's local economic and service functions should be developed so as to promote self containment and provide linkages to the surrounding rural area. Tiverton lies between the PUAs at Exeter and Taunton and has been relatively successful in attracting economic investment but there are also significant flows between the area and Exeter in particular.

5.13 Within the other Area Centres in Mid Devon the emphasis should be primarily on meeting local housing needs and developing their economic base so as to reduce commuting. The scale of development provision suggested for Mid Devon therefore implies a reduction in planned development rates, reflecting the increased strategic policy emphasis on the Exeter PUA and AEA, but provides sufficient scope for Tiverton to develop in a way that will support the roles of the Exeter and Taunton PUAs, and for other centres to meet local needs.

#### East Devon District (outside AEA)

5.14 Outside of the Exeter AEA, there are a number of Area Centres within the District which should accommodate development that addresses local housing needs and economic potential. Many of these Centres are however constrained by important landscape designations and the physical scope for development is limited.

5.15 The level of provision indicated for this part of the District therefore suggests a significant reduction in planned development rates but allows scope for limited additional provision within those less constrained Area Centres, such as Axminster, which are more remote from the Exeter PUA and could achieve a degree of self containment.

#### **Conclusions for the Exeter and eastern Devon Area :**

*Within the Exeter and eastern Devon part of the Central Sub Region, it was concluded that projected development needs should be met in full – maximising the potential of the Exeter PUA and AEA as the economic hub of the sub region. On the basis of the studies undertaken for the Exeter area it was concluded that the maximum achievable level of sustainable development within the AEA in the period to 2016 would be about 11,000 dwellings, representing a slight increase in planned development rates.*

*Elsewhere the priority should be to meet local needs and promote balanced development, with Tiverton having a particular role. Existing provision in the area outside of the AEA already totalled 8,750 dwellings as at 2001 and the Alteration is proposing an additional 1,550 dwellings to accommodate needs up to 2016, representing a 20% reduction in planned development rates.*

*Overall provision within this part of the Central Sub Region therefore totalled 21,300 dwellings.*

Provision 2001 to 2016 compared to actual build rates since 1991

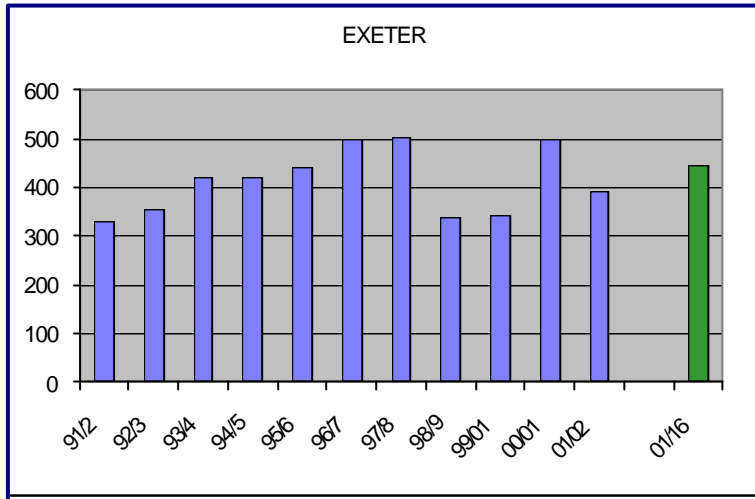


Diagram 1 : Exeter - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

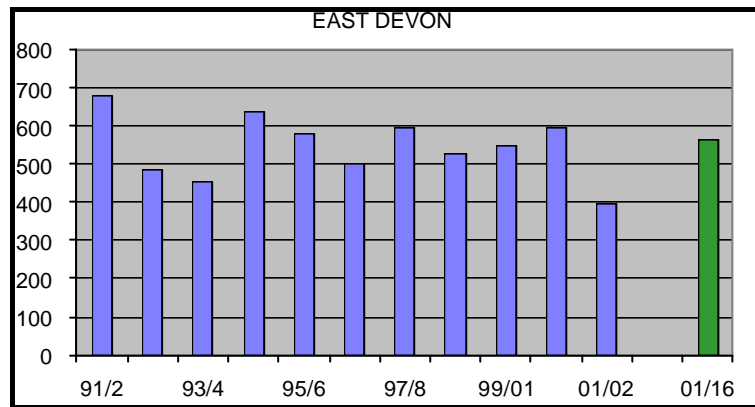


Diagram 2 : East Devon District - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

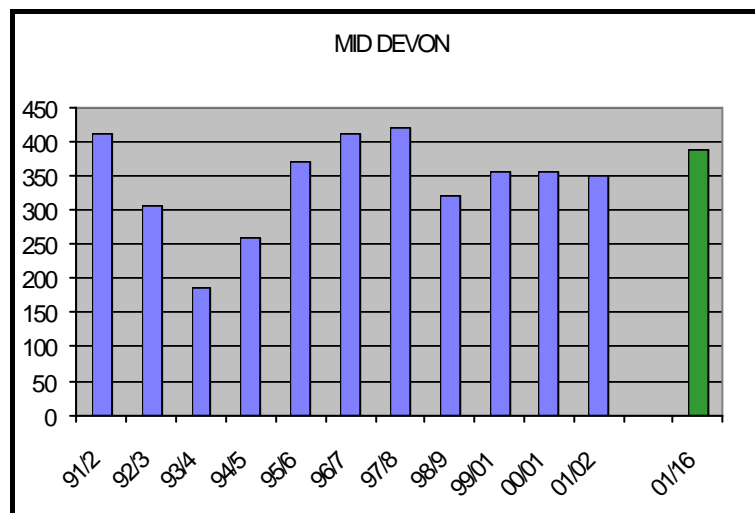


Diagram 3 : Mid Devon District - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

### The Torbay and South Eastern Devon area

5.16 This part of the Central sub region has accommodated significant housing development in the past, primarily related to retirement and pre-retirement inward migration. Development rates have, however, slowed in recent years in response to the increasing constraint on development opportunities and limited economic investment. While there has been some significant successes in attracting new employment into the area since 1991, more recently there have been major job losses, and this supports the continuing need, identified in Regional Planning Guidance, to prioritise economic restructuring and regeneration.

#### The Torbay PUA

5.17 Although the main urban area within this part of Devon, Torbay is more constrained than the other Devon PUAs, and RPG recognises that the encouragement of major growth at centres such as Torbay could “*create problems of unbalanced and possibly unsustainable development*”.

5.18 The studies undertaken of development potential in the Torbay PUA and the scope for urban extensions (see separate study paper : Background Paper 3) have indicated that there is limited potential for major development within Torbay once existing identified development sites have been taken up, and that there are no sustainable locations for strategic urban extensions. This suggests a substantial reduction in dwelling completions within the PUA over the period to 2016.

5.19 On the basis of the studies undertaken, it is proposed that the full potential for development within the existing Torbay PUA should be realised but it is accepted that this will result in lower levels of development provision than in the past – a time when significant urban extensions were being brought forward. The Alteration therefore proposes that the PUA accommodates 4,300 dwellings in the period 2001 to 2016.

#### Elsewhere in the Torbay/Newton Abbot AEA

5.20 The Alteration strategy identifies one of Devon’s main Areas of Economic Activity as including the Torbay PUA together with the sub regional centre of Newton Abbot. Newton Abbot has significant linkages with Torbay in terms of economic activity and travel to work patterns and has accommodated a considerable amount of residential development in recent years. It also has a substantial local economy, although, as in the case of Torbay, major new investment has been limited.

5.21 Although this AEA does have a number of important constraints – including landscape and mineral extraction – there continues to be considerable development pressure within this part of Devon. The Alteration is therefore indicating that development within the AEA should be focused on the PUA itself and at Newton Abbot, the centres that offer the best linkages to employment opportunity and the greatest potential for developing sustainable transport infrastructure.

5.22 The AEA also offers the best opportunity for encouraging economic diversification – a priority identified both in Regional Planning Guidance and the Alteration strategy for this part of Devon. The Alteration is proposing that a greater proportion of development provision within this part of Devon should be accommodated within the AEA, and the scale of provision proposed within the Teignbridge part of the AEA (3,100 dwellings) would represent a continuation of planned development rates in the Newton Abbot area.

#### Elsewhere in the Exeter AEA

5.22a A small part of Teignbridge District falls within the Exeter AEA and PUA to the south west of Exeter. In recognition of some existing commitments (about 150 dwellings at 2002) and potential development - provision is made for 300 dwellings in this area for the period 2001 to 2016 ( a proportion of which will fall within the Exeter PUA)

#### Teignbridge District (outside AEA)

5.23 Outside of the AEA, the Area Centres at Dawlish and Teignmouth need to have scope to meet local housing needs and improve their self containment, while in the north of the area there may be limited development opportunities close to the Exeter PUA and AEA in the period to 2016, which should be assessed at Local Plan level. The Alteration is therefore indicating a significant reduction in planned development rates within this area.

**Conclusions for the Torbay and south eastern Devon Area :**

Within the Torbay and south eastern Devon part of the Central Sub Region, it was concluded that the projected development needs could not be met in full without seriously compromising landscape, environmental and other constraints. Similarly, the economic potential of the area was not considered sufficient to support substantial additional residential development and population growth – the priority being to promote economic diversification.

On the basis of the studies undertaken for the Torbay area it was concluded that the maximum achievable level of sustainable development within the AEA in the period to 2016 would be about 7,400 dwellings, representing a 10% reduction in planned development rates. Elsewhere the priority should be to meet local needs and promote balanced development. Existing provision in the area outside of the **Torbay** AEA already totalled 4,000 dwellings as at 2001 and the Alteration is proposing an additional 400 dwellings to accommodate needs up to 2016, representing a 25% reduction in planned development rates. Part of this total (**about 300 dwellings**) ~~could however be~~ **is** closely related to the Exeter **AEA/PUA**.

Overall provision within this part of the Central Sub Region therefore totalled ~~11,500~~ **11,800** dwellings.

**Provision 2001 to 2016 compared to actual build rates since 1991**

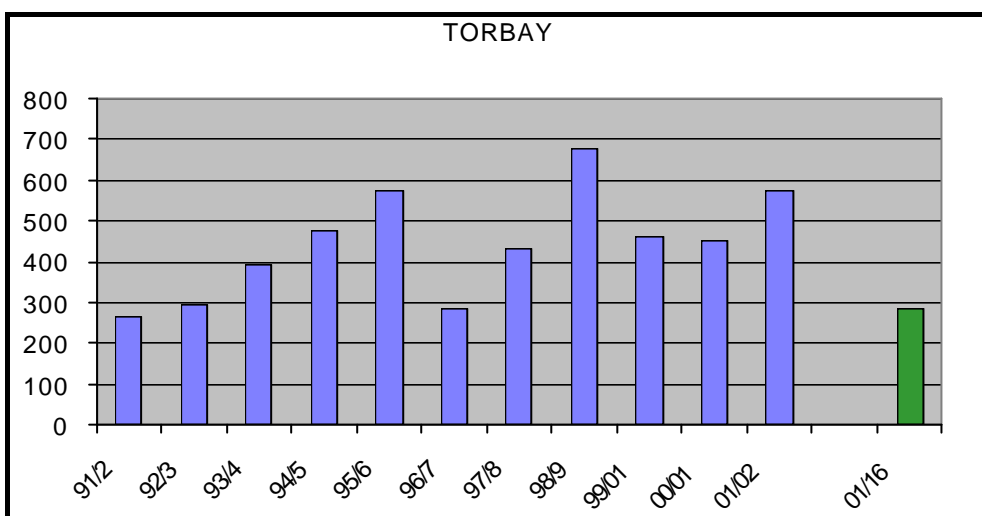


Diagram 4 : Torbay - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

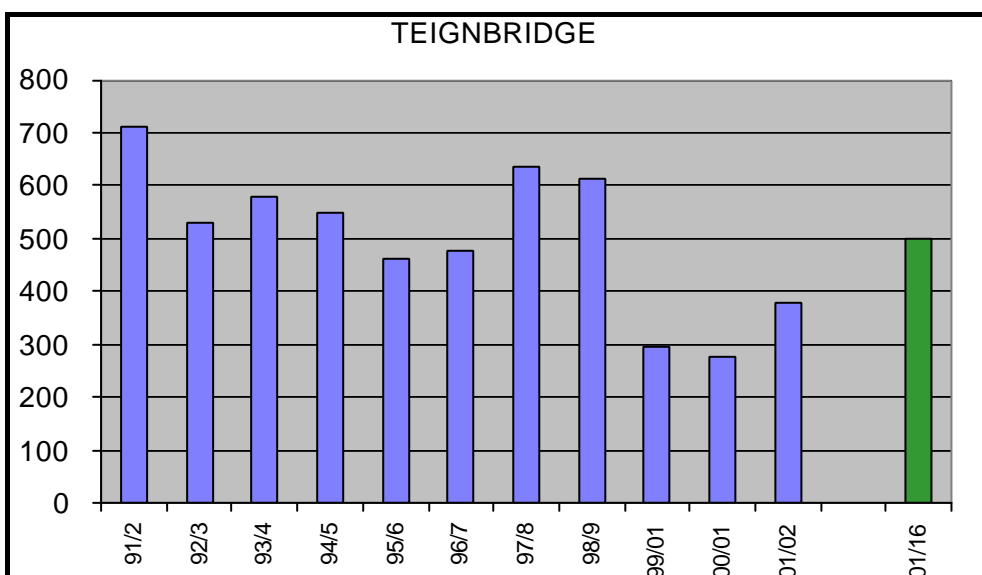
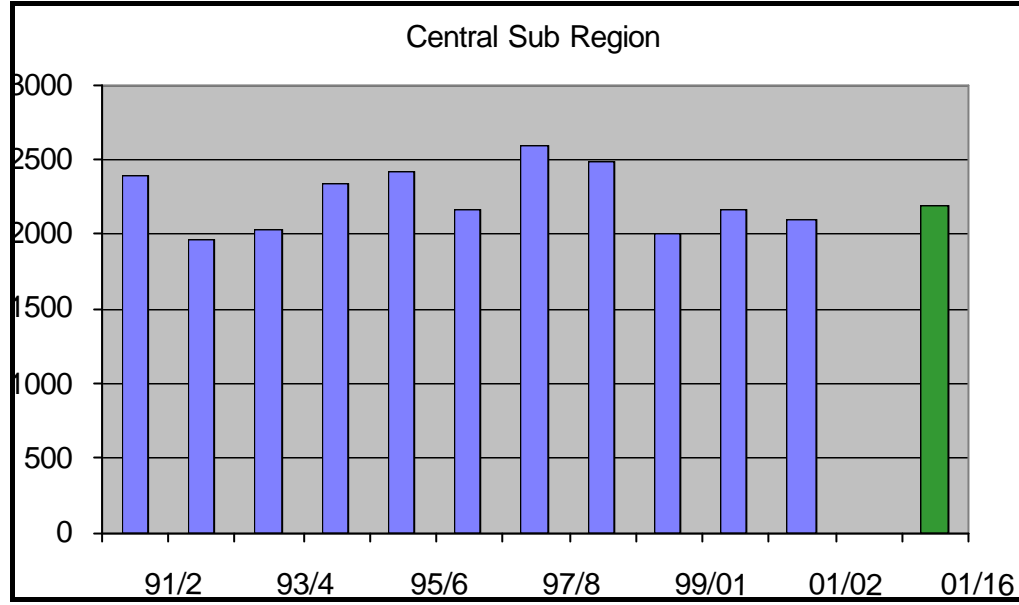


Diagram 5 : Teignbridge - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

**Central Sub Region as a Whole**



-Diagram 6 : Central Sub Region (Devon) - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

## **The Western Sub Region within Devon**

5.24 Demographic projections consistent with the overall Regional Planning Guidance level of housing change indicate a possible need for about ~~27,000~~27,900 dwellings in this part of Devon in the period 2001 to 2016 – a requirement for about 1,800 dwellings per annum. This compares to actual completion rates in the period ~~1995-1996~~ to ~~2001-2002~~ of about ~~1,950~~1,920 dwellings per annum.

5.25 Based on these demographic projections, development provision for Devon, this sub region is expected to experience relatively limited growth in workforce in the period 2001 to 2016 – an increase of about 2,600, just over 10 % of the Devon change overall.

## **The Plymouth and South Western Devon**

5.26 Over the period since 1991 there has been considerable success in attracting new economic investment into the Plymouth area – but overall job growth has been at a relatively low level compared to the scale of the existing economic base. Traditional economic activity in the area – such as defence related employment – has declined in significance over the past decade but new investment has helped to replace these job opportunities. The local economy remains vulnerable to the effects of any future downturn in the national economy, and in these circumstances it will be important for the area to fully realise its economic development potential.

5.27 Projections indicate that housing needs in this part of Devon will continue to relate primarily to changes within the existing population, rather than to inward migration, and, if social exclusion is to be reduced, provision aimed at meeting this need should not be artificially constrained.

## **The Plymouth PUA**

5.28 The studies undertaken of development potential in the Plymouth PUA area (see separate study : Background Paper 1) have indicated that there is significant potential for development within the PUA arising from the development of brown land. The urban capacity studies carried out by the City Council have provided a challenging target for such development – and there are very few opportunities for urban green field site development within the City boundary.

5.29 The studies carried out for the Structure Plan Alteration have, however, confirmed the conclusions reached in the emerging South Hams Local Plan that the new community proposal within the Plymouth AEA provides an opportunity to achieve sustainable development on the periphery of the existing PUA – in a form which could function and be planned as a major urban extension. This approach appeared to have significant advantages in terms of sustainable development when compared to other urban extension options either within Devon or Cornwall.

5.30 The studies did not clearly identify scope for any further urban strategic extensions to the Plymouth PUA – although more detailed assessment would be necessary to test the potential for limited development on the urban periphery. Although there was physical capacity for development to the north of the PUA these areas had significant deficiencies in terms of sustainable access. It was therefore concluded that, taking full account of development potential both within the PUA and through the new community / urban extension could provide for a least 12,500 dwellings over the period 2001 to 2016.

## **Elsewhere in the Plymouth AEA**

5.31 Outside of the PUA and any potential urban extensions, development should be located within existing communities where this would provide for balanced development i.e. accessible to local employment and other services / facilities. The scope for any development at Ivybridge would need to be tested against alternative additional provision within the new community – but, at a strategic level, the studies undertaken indicated that the potential within the new community offered a more sustainable approach.

## **South Hams District (outside the AEA)**

5.32 Outside of the Plymouth AEA, the priority will be to ensure that local development needs are met within the Area Centres – where this can help to promote balanced development. Sufficient scope will be needed in order to maintain local services, ensure a supply of affordable housing and local employment opportunity, while not leading to additional commuting. Taking account of existing provision already made within emerging Plans it was concluded that limited additional provision would be appropriate in order to meet needs to 2016 – with planned development rates being significantly reduced.

### West Devon District

5.33 Current (2001) levels of provision remaining within West Devon were considered to provide sufficient scope to meet most local needs in the period to 2016. Development rates had been lower than those implied by the adopted Structure Plan and additional provision would not be consistent with development strategy objectives for the rural areas – of for the two main Area Centres. Although Okehampton is relatively remote from the Exeter PUA its capacity for balanced development is limited and adequately reflected in existing levels of provision. It is proposed therefore that development provision in West Devon be only marginally increased and planned development rates reduced accordingly.

### Dartmoor National Park

5.34 The development priority within the National Park is to address local housing needs – particularly in terms of affordable housing – rather than to respond to housing market demand. The level of provision proposed therefore represents an assessment of local housing need in the period to 2016 taking into account the environmental constraints affecting the area.

### ***Conclusions for the Plymouth and south western Devon Area :***

***Within the Plymouth and south western Devon part of the Western Sub Region, it was concluded that projected development needs should be met in full – maximising the potential of the Plymouth PUA and AEA as the primary focus for economic activity and development. On the basis of the studies undertaken for the Plymouth area it was concluded that in the period to 2016 the AEA could accommodate at least 13,500 dwellings, representing a 10% reduction in planned development rates. Elsewhere, outside of the National Park, the priority should be to meet local needs and promote balanced development. Existing provision in the area outside of the AEA already totalled 7,100 dwellings as at 2001 and the Alteration is proposing an additional 1,100 dwellings to accommodate needs up to 2016, representing a 20% reduction in planned development rates. Overall provision within this part of the Western Sub Region therefore totalled 21,700 dwellings.***

Provision 2001 to 2016 compared to actual build rates since 1991

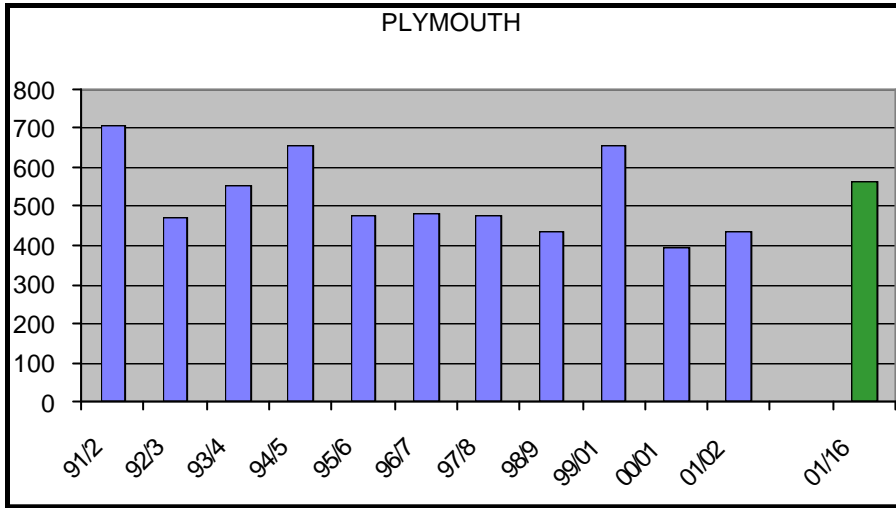


Diagram 7 : Plymouth - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

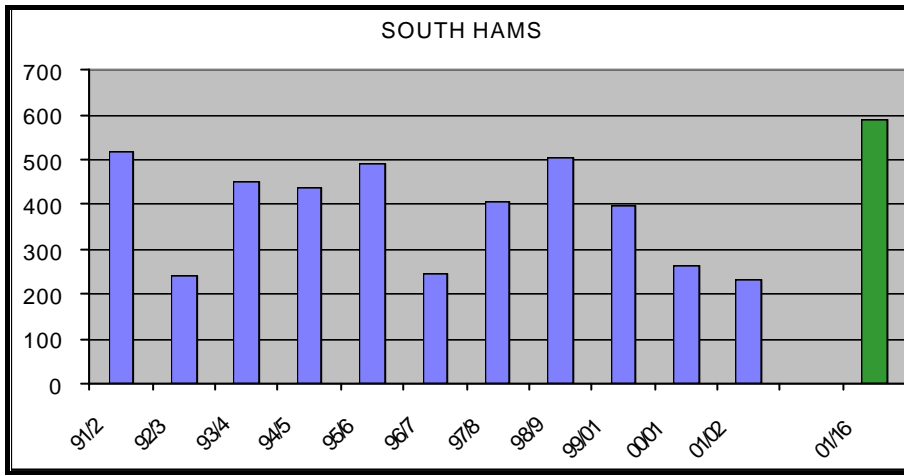


Diagram 8 : South Hams - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

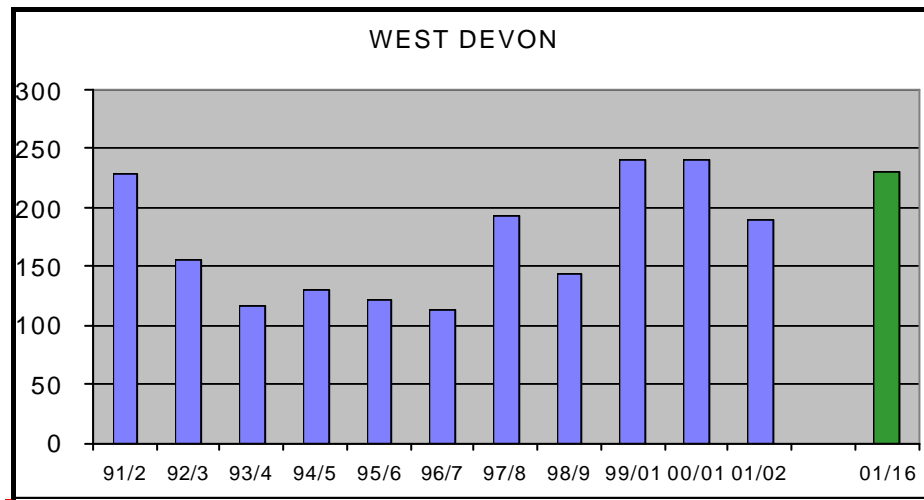


Diagram 9 : West Devon - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

## Northern Devon

5.35 In the period since 1991 employment growth within this part of Devon has been relatively high when compared to the size of the existing local economy. Constraints to further economic development have been primarily related to the area's remoteness and to the related need for improved transportation infrastructure. Existing and planned investment in infrastructure will help to overcome some of these constraints and potentially lead to enhanced levels of economic growth. Recent rates of development have also been relatively high and have been consistent with current Structure Plan provision. Projections reflecting Regional Planning Guidance do however indicate a reduced level of development "need" in this part of Devon in the period to 2016.

### The Barnstaple / Bideford AEA

5.36 Barnstaple is identified in Regional Planning Guidance as a centre for balanced growth. It should provide scope for economic investment and related housing provision so as to develop its role as the primary focus for the northern part of Devon. The development strategy suggests a greater degree of emphasis on the role of Barnstaple and the associated AEA than in the past and the provision suggested in the Alteration for North Devon provides scope for additional housing to be brought forward within Barnstaple and the wider AEA. At Bideford, the scope for additional development is limited given the constraints on future employment growth, but existing commitments will help to contribute to development needs in the AEA.

### North Devon District (outside the AEA)

5.37 Outside of the Barnstaple area, the Area Centres at South Molton and Ilfracombe are considered to have limited potential for major employment growth and residential provision will need to reflect local housing needs, the need to support regeneration objectives and to support local services and facilities for their hinterlands. In the context of existing levels of provision, the Alteration is implying a marginal change in provision but a reduction in planned development rates in the area.

### Torridge District (outside the AEA)

5.38 Outside of the Bideford area development should be limited to that required to address local needs and support greater self containment. The Area Centres will provide the most appropriate location for meeting local needs but they have limited scope for any significant growth in local employment opportunities. The Alteration is proposing only a marginal change in provision ([although actual commitments are now understood to be about 500 dwellings less than previously assumed](#)) in order to carry the Plan forward to 2016 and is therefore indicating a significant reduction in planned development rates.

## **Conclusions for the ~~Plymouth-Northern~~ and ~~south-western~~ Devon Area :**

*Within the northern Devon part of the Western Sub Region, it was concluded that projected development needs should be met in full – maximising the area's economic potential and the scope for the Barnstaple area to enhance its role. It was concluded that in the period to 2016 the AEA should be the main focus for development and could accommodate significant additional provision. Elsewhere the priority should be to meet local needs and promote balanced development. Existing provision in the area already totalled 8,900 dwellings as at 2001 and the Alteration is proposing an additional 1,100 dwellings to accommodate needs up to 2016, representing a 25% reduction in overall planned development rates. Most of the additional provision should be at Barnstaple or other sustainable locations within the AEA.*

*Overall provision within this part of the Western Sub Region therefore totalled 10,000 dwellings.*

**Provision 2001 to 2016 compared to actual build rates since 1991**

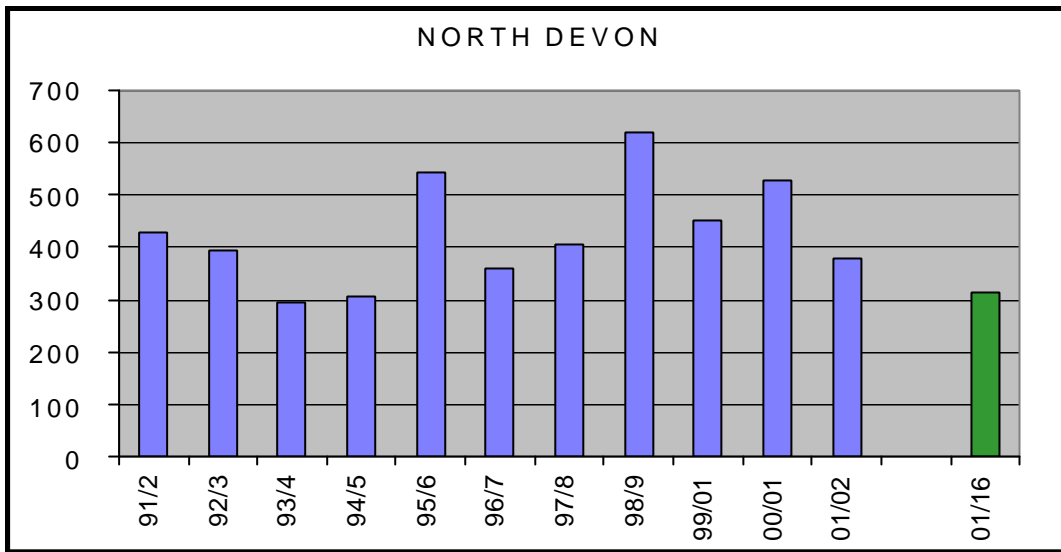


Diagram 10 : North Devon - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

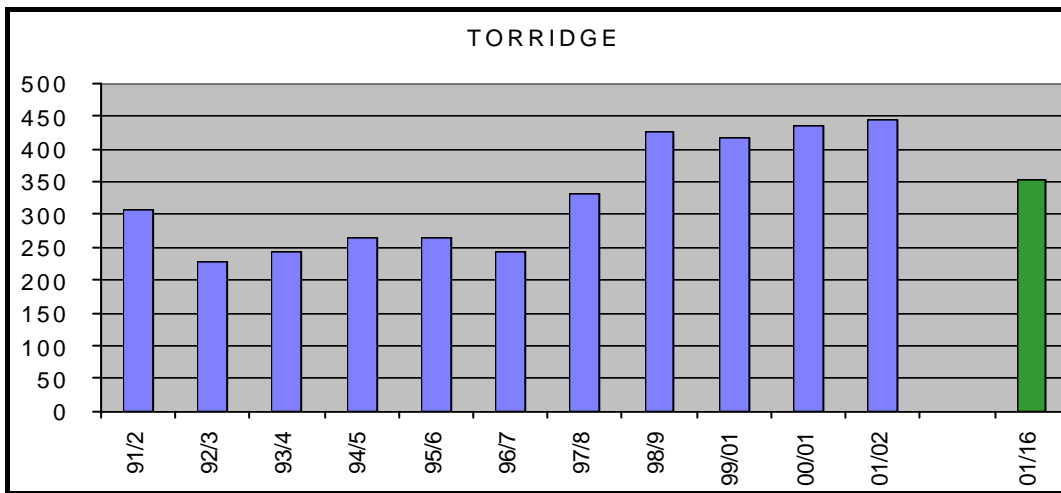


Diagram 11 : Torridge - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

**Western Sub Region as a Whole**

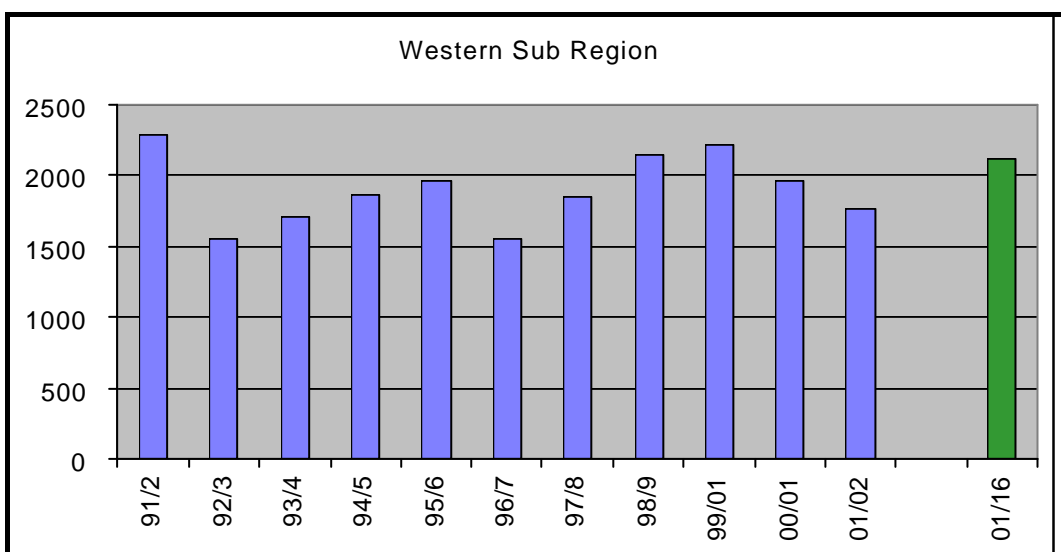


Diagram 12 : Western Sub Region ( Devon) - Actual and Proposed Dwelling Completions

## OVERALL SUMMARY

In summary, therefore, the Alteration is proposing that :

- overall provision is made for 64,500 dwellings in the period 2001 to 2016, representing a 9% reduction in planned development rates as compared to the adopted Structure Plan
- provision for approximately 33,000 dwellings is made within the Devon part of the Central Sub Region as defined in Regional Planning Guidance – maintaining development rates in the Exeter eastern Devon area but reducing them significantly in the Torbay south eastern Devon area
- provision for approximately 31,500 dwellings is made within the Devon part of the Western Sub Region as defined in Regional Planning Guidance
- overall development rates within Devon’s three PUAs are significantly increased as compared to the adopted Structure Plan – although reflecting the constraints affecting the Torbay area. Planned development rates in the PUAs as a whole are proposed to increase by ~~almost 20~~ over 10 % (using the revise definition of PUAs now included in the Alteration Pre EIP changes) - primarily as a result of maximising urban development capacity at Plymouth and Exeter PUAs.
- overall, approximately 60% of dwelling provision and 70% of employment land is located within the four main Areas of Economic Activity.
- overall, just over 50% of all residential development should be located on brown land – although this proportion may be increased if Local Plans are able to bring forward additional sites more quickly than in the recent past.
- existing provision for 660 ha of employment land is retained with an additional 60 ha now included as a consequence of the Alteration (Pre EIP changes) – with ~~330-360~~ ha in the Central Sub Region and ~~330ha-360~~ ha in the Western Sub Region.